
For Immediate Release**Twelfth Night - Christmas in Cambridge**

Cambridge, Ontario. January 6, 2009... The final event in the winter festivities of Christmas in Cambridge happens this weekend. An annual tradition, the "Twelfth Night" is a revival of one of the oldest celebrations in the western world, and not to be mistaken for a presentation of William Shakespeare's play of the same name.

Known in ancient Rome as Saturnalia, this was a twelve-day festival celebrating the Winter Solstice and the Cambridge version is slated for Saturday, January 10, 8-11pm, Armenian Centre, 15 International Village Drive. Guests are encouraged to come dressed in costume or any fancy dress of their choice as the City of Cambridge hosts this marvel of activities including demonstrations of English folk dancing by Orange Peel Morris, the Cambridge Splinters and the London Playford Dancers. Orange Peel Morris will also present a traditional Cornish Mummers Play entitled St. George and the Dragon and sing Pub Carols from South Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Added to the mix is a performance by the local trio Tethera who will provide ambient instrumental music to set the mood and

Relative Harmony will host an English Country Dance where those willing can join in and participate. Motley the Jester will be circulating through the crowd with good-hearted mischief, and Father Christmas will be in attendance in the role of Master of the Revels.

A buffet is provided and there will be a cash bar. Tickets are \$15 and will be available at City Hall, the Allan Reuter Centre, David Durward Centre, Cambridge Centre for the Arts, W.G. Johnson Centre and the John Dolson Centre or call 519.740.4681 ext. 4202.

Historical Background

In Christian times, it became the Twelve Days of Christmas. Beginning on Boxing Day, the Twelve Days consisted of dancing, feasting, music and merriment. It was the origin of today's Christmas holidays and Twelfth Night, the last and greatest night of the festival, was regarded as the culmination of all the seasons' celebrations.

In the courts of the English Kings and Queens, this celebration was regarded as much more important than Christmas Day and was celebrated with dancing, feasting and elaborate Court Masques. These Masques consisted of fancy dress parties with dancing, fireworks and elaborate theatrical productions. The common people celebrated much more modestly, but with the same enthusiasm. It was an important holiday up until colonial times in the early

Americas, but has since become largely forgotten. Revivals of this celebration are occurring today in both Britain and the USA.

Christmas in Cambridge, in collaboration with the Mill Race Folk Society, is once again presenting a Twelfth Night celebration as the grand finale of the Christmas in Cambridge festival of events.

This year marks the third year for the event. Last year, some 200 people turned out to revel in the music, food and dancing - a very successful community experience. "They were enthralled with the costumes and the variety of entertainment," says Colleen Lichti in Community Services.

For more information regarding this or other Christmas in Cambridge events, contact:

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The City of Cambridge is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. It is strategically located astride highway 401 in Southwestern Ontario, part of Canada's Technology Triangle. In 2008, the population reached over 125,000 people. With a multicultural mix and a strong foundation of support services, Cambridge has a diverse economic base with leading industries in manufacturing, automotive, high technology, pharmaceutical, business and financial services and hospitality/retail. The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is an employer with a work environment that offers the opportunity to provide service to the community through creativity and innovation, and with opportunities for career growth and advancement. Based on the 2007 BMA Management Consulting Inc Municipal Study, the City of Cambridge is one of only four municipalities in the province that is debt free.

For more information on the area or the corporation visit www.cambridge.ca

The City of Cambridge press room is located at <http://www.cambridge.ca/article.php?sid=176>

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